Lisa Russell

EDU 583 Essential Belief Statement

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During my first career I was a travel consultant, but after September 11th the industry began to spiral downward. I sold my agency and enrolled in college. As my children entered school I became involved in the PTA, became a Girl Scout Leader, and began coaching through the local community center. These volunteering opportunities enlightened me to the roles of mentoring and teaching so when a career change was in my immediate future I selected a path in education.

When I began taking education courses I thought for sure that I wanted to be a middle school special education teacher. When volunteering I enjoyed working with the students who were weak in different skill and enjoyed seeing them glow with the sense of accomplishment as they succeeded at different tasks. One of my Girl Scouts was a child who was hard of hearing. I became interested in American Sign Language, so I took a couple of courses. When the young lady was about to enter high school the school district advertised for an educational technician and I received the job. Upon taking the job I continued with my courses and began taking more math courses because I liked the challenge and also noticed it was a weakness of many of the high school students where I worked. Due to the unfortunate death of a fellow staff member from the math department, I was asked to fill in as a long-term substitute for the remainder of that school year. I applied for the position when it was posted over the summer and was appointed to it. You can see that I chose my profession because I enjoy having the opportunities to help students with weaknesses and seeing them gain the self-confidence that they need to become successful.

An ideal teaching environment, in reference to working with my colleagues, is to take advantage of the opportunity of meeting together. I feel it is important to meet every other day for a minimum of thirty minutes to talk about student needs, department needs, to plan together, discuss grading procedures, work on curriculum, etc. Collaboration is a key component to creating a successful team and meeting the needs of all students and teachers. In addition, Professional Learning Communities enhance any one team or department by collaborating across disciplines. It would be beneficial for a PLC to meet bimonthly, if at all possible.

As an educator I have taken on many leadership roles within my school and RSU, such as; math department chair, math/science grant team, grading task force committee, literacy team, RTI team and class advisor.

I personally am a very visual learner and clearly understand that there are multiple ways to teach a concept and gain student understanding. I try to incorporate a variety of styles into my teachings. I enjoy trying new strategies and request feedback from students on its effectiveness. This express’s who I am, because as an educator I try to make all students successful by recognizing their weaknesses and helping them to gain confidence in math.

The mission of our school is to promote academic teaching-learning-success, to ensure that students demonstrate an understanding of how issues and cultures affect our local, national, global and digital societies in order to be functioning and active citizens, and to instill values, respect and responsibility in all our students. I was a part of creating the school mission statement and I truly believe in our school’s mission and I incorporate them into my teachings every day.

I’m hoping that this course will help me improve my teaching practices in the classroom, give me ideas to enhance my curriculum and advise me on how to motivate, unmotivated learners.